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[ranggin@reveilleinc.com](mailto:ranggin@reveilleinc.com)**ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION ADDRESSES NEEDS OF UNEMPLOYED AND UNDEREMPLOYED LOCAL RESIDENTS THROUGH WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE**

*Funding will Prepare Untapped Sector of Orange County Workforce for In-Demand Jobs through Innovative Collaboration between Educational Institutions, Nonprofits and Local Businesses*

**NEWPORT BEACH, Calif. (January 7, 2020)** – The Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF) recently launched the pilot phase of a new Workforce Development Initiative. The program is designed to build pathways to brighter futures for graduating high school seniors enrolling in community college, disconnected older youth and underemployed adults who may not have the means to advance their employment opportunities due to barriers such as poverty and lack of access to education and job training.

OCCF awarded grants totaling \$500,000 with a focus on connecting community colleges, nonprofits and businesses through strategic pipelines to identify, support, and ultimately place potential employees in middle-skills jobs. The programs all aim to provide individuals with the necessary tools to secure well-paying jobs primarily concentrated in the health care, advanced manufacturing, and information technology sectors.

“Our commitment to the Orange County community drives us to seek opportunities for game-changing impact, such as this newly launched Workforce Development Initiative,” said Shelley Hoss, OCCF president and CEO. “This initiative will help individuals struggling to make ends meet to acquire in-demand technical acumen in continually evolving industries and prepare them for a strong and successful future. It will drive our community’s economic growth and fuel successful outcomes for next generations.”

There is a critical need to better prepare potential employees across the nation: A [Gallup poll](#) indicates that one in three young adults are underemployed in the United States; further, at 21 to 24 percent, California has been ranked among the states with the [highest rate](#) of underemployment. However, even full-time employment may not provide an escape from poverty in expensive regions such as Orange County, where the high cost of living still leaves nearly [20 percent](#) of working poor struggling to live here. Local barriers to exiting poverty include low wages, a high cost of living and a changing job market. This initiative provides an answer to each of those challenges.

The good news is that there are well-paying jobs that can fuel our economy and enhance the quality of life for all Orange County residents. The middle-skills job market is [projected to grow 25 percent](#) over the next 10 years in Orange County—equating to 17,678 new jobs requiring education beyond a high school diploma, yet less than a four-year college degree. According to the [2019-20 Orange County Community Indicators Report](#), the most in-demand occupations reflect Orange County’s fastest-growing industries which include information technology and healthcare.

The Santa Ana College (SAC) Foundation, selected to receive a \$250,000 grant, exemplifies the initiative’s targeted approach to preparation for middle-skills jobs. With their grant, the SAC Foundation will expand an existing Information Technology certificate program. In partnership with Hope Builders, High School Inc. Academies, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Orange County and the Inland Empire, and

Alteryx, the program will also provide wraparound support services for college students as they complete a college certificate program, an eight-week internship, and specific industry credentials in preparation for high-demand employment opportunities in the technology field.

OCCF awarded these grants from the Henry W. & Ellen R. Warne Family Endowment Fund – a permanently endowed fund that directs one-third of its grantmaking to Orange County educational institutions. Grant recipients for this pilot phase include:

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Summary</b>
<b>Career and College Resource Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Santa Ana Unified School District</li> <li>• Valley High School</li> <li>• Santa Ana Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>	High School Inc. will coordinate the hire of a career coordinator to expand their business-partner model by (1) identifying and engaging corporate partners, (2) strengthening relationships with accrediting educational institutions and (3) providing alumni with employment, post-secondary guidance and financial resources.
<b>HealthWorks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• JVS SoCal</li> <li>• Golden West College</li> <li>• Saddleback College</li> <li>• Women Helping Women</li> <li>• Local health-industry employers</li> </ul>	JVS SoCal, in partnership with the Golden West College Foundation, will expand its 8-week HealthWorks program into Orange County, which certifies low to moderate income adults as Certified Nursing Assistants. This training program will serve as a pipeline to drive eligible students to pursue further education and stackable credentials at Golden West College or Santa Ana College.
<b>Behavior Technician Certificate Program+</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Autism Business Association</li> <li>• Santiago Canyon College</li> </ul>	This project in the Rancho Santiago Community College District will provide training, certification and job placement for students to become autism care technicians.
<b>IT Training and Employment Placement Program</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hope Builders</li> <li>• High School Inc.</li> <li>• Big Brothers Big Sisters</li> <li>• Alteryx</li> </ul>	This collaboration with the Santa Ana College (SAC) Foundation seeks to provide a pipeline for 35 youth to enter the IT industry. The program will focus on career mentorship, on-the-job experience, employment opportunities and wrap-around supportive services.

OCCF will track the success of this new Workforce Development Initiative by measuring the increase in individuals completing certification programs, being hired into middle-skills roles, and demonstrating increases in income as a result. Ultimately, OCCF hopes to create a model that can be successfully scaled across Orange County and replicated for different industries.

**About Orange County Community Foundation**

Founded in 1989, the Orange County Community Foundation (OCCF) works with donors, strengthens the local nonprofit sector and works to find solutions to community needs. Since its inception, OCCF has awarded \$630 million in grants and scholarships and ranks in the top one percent in grantmaking activity among more than 780 U.S. community foundations. For more information, visit [oc-cf.org](http://oc-cf.org) or call 949-553-4202. Be a part of our conversation on [Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). View OCCF’s 2019 annual report [here](#).